

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 01469 011534Z
ACTION NEA-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1469

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, FR, IS
SUBJECT: FRENCH-ISRAELI RELATIONS

REFS: (A) TEL AVIV 794 (B) PARIS 5586 (C) EC BRUSSELS
1223 (D) PARIS 5750

1. WE DISCUSSED THE CURRENT STATE OF FRENCH-ISRAELI
RELATIONS WITH THE MFA DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN
AFFAIRS (MINERBI) ON FEBRUARY 28. WHILE HIS COMMENTS WERE
IN LINE WITH THOSE IN REFTELS, HE ADDED SEVERAL POINTS.
ISRAEL IS DOING ITS UTMOST, HE SAID, TO ACHIEVE
NORMALIZATION IN ITS RELATIONS WITH FRANCE. HOWEVER,
"NORMALIZATION" IN THIS SENSE SHOULD BE SEEN AS A
RESTORATION OF RELATIONS TO THE STATE THEY WERE PRIOR
TO THE ABU DAUD AFFAIR WHEN, MINERBI READILY AGREED,
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 01469 011534Z

THEY HAD NOT BEEN ESPECIALLY WARM. ISRAEL IS UNDER NO
ILLUSION THAT THE VIEWS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS COINCIDE
AND RECOGNIZES THE LIMITS OF WHAT IT CAN ACHIEVE WITH
FRANCE.

2. MINERBI SAW SEVERAL POSITIVE SIGNS IN RECENT WEEKS.
THUS, UPON HIS RETURN TO PARIS, AMBASSADOR GAZIT HAD BEEN

RECEIVED BY FOREIGN MINISTER GUIRINGAUD AND PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING WITHIN A WEEK. FURTHERMORE, THE MEETING IN BRUSSELS BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTERS ALLON AND GUIRINGAUD HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL AND THE TWO MINISTERS HAD ESTABLISHED A GOOD PERSONAL CONTACT. (MINERBI ADDED THAT THIS CONTACT SHOULD NOT BE OVERSTRESSED BECAUSE ALLON HAD HAD A SIMILAR WARM PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES.) ISRAEL WAS ALSO PLEASED TO SEE THAT GISCARD HAD "NOT SIGNED EVERYTHING" WHICH HIS SAUDI ARABIAN HOSTS HAD PRESENTED DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO RIYADH. LIKEWISE, ISRAEL HAS NOTED WITH SATISFACTION A REFRESHING TONE OF MODERATION IN RECENT STATEMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST BY FRENCH LEADERS (REFTEL D).

3. IN COMMENTING ON THE DISCUSSIONS IN PARIS REGARDING THE FRENCH-ISRAELI EXTRADITION TREATY, MINERBI SAID THAT MFA LEGAL ADVISOR ROSENNE HAD TOLD HIS MINISTRY COLLEAGUES UPON HIS RETURN THAT THE ABU DAOUD CASE IS NOT REPEAT NO CONSIDERED CLOSED, IN THE SENSE THAT DISCUSSIONS WILL CONTINUE ON HOW THE CASE HAD BEEN HANDLED. ROSENNE SAID THAT IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH FRENCH OFFICIALS THEY HAD ADMITTED THAT THE TREATY HAD NOT BEEN CORRECTLY IMPLEMENTED BECAUSE THE GOI HAD NOT BEEN FULLY INFORMED OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE ABU DAOUD DETENTION.

4. REGARDING VISITS, MINERBI SAID THAT GUIRINGAUD'S VISIT TO ISRAEL HAS NOW BEEN SET FOR THE LATTER HALD OF CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 01469 011534Z

MARCH, WITH THE EXACT DATE STILL TO BE DETERMINED. ISRAEL HAS AGREED THAT PRIME MINISTER RABIN WILL PAY AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO FRANCE LATER THIS YEAR.

5. MINERBI SUMMED UP BY SAYING THAT FOR A COMBINATION OF REASONS, NOT LEAST OF WHICH ARE THE UPCOMING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN FRANCE, FRENCH POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST IN RECENT WEEKS HAS, FROM AN ISRAELI POINT OF VIEW, SOMEWHAT IMPROVED. WHILE IT WOULD BE INCORRECT TO SAY THAT FRANCE HAS BECOME MORE PRO-ISRAELI, IT HAS AT LEAST NOT BECOME MORE PRO-ARAB. ISRAEL IS PLEASED THAT FRENCH MIDDLE EAST POLICY NOW SEEMS MORE CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH THAT OF OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. DUNNIGAN

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